



# SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME

Public Health Guidance for Community-Level Preparedness and Response to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) Version 2

## Supplement G: Communication and Education

### Appendix G4

#### CDC Field Communications Liaisons

The CDC response to a major SARS outbreak will take place through CDC's centralized Emergency Communications System (ECS) and through the deployment of field communication personnel. The responsibilities of CDC field personnel are to: 1) inform and advise federal efforts about the local situation and developments, 2) coordinate federal activities in such a manner that they do not contradict or otherwise impede local efforts, and 3) support state and local communication efforts, as necessary. To facilitate this coordination between state and local health department personnel and CDC communication personnel, CDC has designated two critical positions -- Field Communication Media Liaison and Field Communication Community Liaison (described below). These two roles correspond to the media relations and community relations/outreach response functions described above.

#### CDC Field Communication Media Liaison (FCML)

Among the activities of the CDC Field Communication Media Liaison are to:

- Work with state and local officials to facilitate the effective management of local communication efforts and the on-site communications center
- Support state/local officials in facilitating the provision and management of accurate, timely, and relevant information to the public and media (and timely and appropriate responses to errors and misinformation)
- Help enhance state and local communication efforts (e.g., obtain or verify information, prepare and debrief subject matter experts)
- Provide information to the federal (CDC and HHS) communication centers regarding local issues and developments, and coordinate federal and state/local communication.
- Serve as the principal CDC media advisor in the field, and assist the CDC ECS Leadership Team by serving as a media spokesperson when appropriate
- Assist state and local officials in preparing statements and materials to inform the public about a possible or known case of SARS-CoV disease in the jurisdiction, explain that health officials are working with CDC to confirm or rule-out the diagnosis (or to prevent further transmission), and inform the public about measures underway to prevent the spread of infection.
- Work with the lead CDC Center for SARS (NCID) to determine the most appropriate messages and timing for the notification of the news media and general public and to ensure proper clearance of messages and materials
- Act as CDC representative for coordination with the JIC for factual and consistent distribution of information and identification of information needs
- As necessary, help locate authorized public health spokespersons, and assist in directing local media to previously identified reliable state and local subject matter experts on SARS (e.g., local health officers and infectious disease physicians)
- Assist state and local officials in preparing for media interviews, developing media materials, and scheduling and managing media interviews. This includes assisting with logistics and working with local, state, and local officials to lease space as needed for briefings and other communications activities.
- Provide regular updates to CDC's ECS regarding local developments, concerns, and issues.

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### CDC Field Communication Community Liaison (FCCL)

CDC's communication plans include a Field Communication Community Liaison to serve as a CDC community relations advisor in the field. This person can assist local/state health department officials and work with the ECS in serving as a contact point to local hospitals and infectious disease specialists. The liaison can play an important role in assisting with communication tasks relevant to the implementation of control measures (e.g., use of personal protective equipment, isolation and quarantine). The liaison will attend all CDC response team meetings and provide updates to the team leader and media liaison regarding community outreach and education activities.

As most community relations activities are state and local responsibilities, the liaison should coordinate with state and local officials to assess the need for assistance. Among the activities of the CDC Field Communication Community Liaison are to:

- Assist in identifying key community partners, developing and maintaining a contact list of these partners, and scheduling and participate in daily briefings
- Assist in the management of the [local] Joint Information Center
- Assist in the management of community outreach staff
- Assist in coordination and management of training and education outreach activities for healthcare professionals
- Assist with communication and educational activities for quarantined persons
- Participate in daily staff meetings held by the CDC field team leader.
- Send a daily community outreach activity report to the CDC DEOC and, if identified, the CDC SARS response team
- Request the DEOC to send new materials as updated and to provide information on new and emerging questions and issues identified from hotlines and other sources
- In coordination with local authorities, maintain a daily log of community information activities to facilitate the subsequent evaluation of the outbreak response
- In coordination with local authorities, write, edit, approve, and initiate clearance procedures for customized community outreach materials. To avoid confusing or contradictory messages, materials should be cleared by the JIC, program or content expert, state/local health departments.
- Assist HHS, CDC, and state and local officials in working with state and community groups.

For more information, visit [www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/sars) or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)